[29th January 1936

Location of polling stations outside municipal limits for electors to District Board Elections resident in municipal area.

* 563 *Q.*—Mrs. A. Rukmani Lakshmipathi: Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that voters for the district board elections who reside within municipal limits are called upon to record their votes only at polling stations outside the municipal areas;

(*b*) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the serious inconvenience caused to the electors by such a procedure; and

(*c*) what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken by the Government to remedy the same?

A.—(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) A complaint was received about the alleged inconvenience.

(*c*) Attention is invited to item (*i*) of the draft amendments to the rules for the preparation of electoral rolls for local boards published in Local Self-Government Department Notification No. 1244 of Part I-A of the *Fort St. George Gazette*, dated 15th October 1935.

Mrs. A. Rukmani Lakshmipathi:—"Will the Hon. the Chief Minister be pleased to state what exactly the difficulty is in locating polling stations within the municipal limits, having regard to the inconvenience caused to voters? Will he consider the desirability of removing the polling stations into the municipal areas?"

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—"I couldn't hear the question fully, but I think the position is that municipalities are outside the area of jurisdiction of the district boards. From the outset, Government have been following the principle that polling stations should not be in any place which is not within the jurisdiction of the district boards."

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar:—"Is there any objection in law to the polling stations being put in the municipal areas?"

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—"As the matter is not free from doubt, I shall have it examined."

Mr. G. Rameswara Rao:—"Sir, I have a copy of the draft notification in my hands, but I don't think that will meet the situation. I am not aware of any principle of jurisprudence which says that voters should go anywhere for voting instead of voting at convenient stations."

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—"I cannot understand what principle of jurisprudence is involved in this question. The point is whether a polling station should be located only within the area of jurisdiction of the district board; as far as possible, we shall see that they are conveniently situated, so as to cause the least inconvenience to the voters."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI:—"May I point out to my hon. Friend that this jurisdiction means almost nothing, seeing that the polling officers are not appointed by the district boards and the conduct of the election is not in the hands of the district boards? That being the case, may I know whether he will not consider the desirability of having these polling stations in the municipal areas, so that a large number of voters may not be put to unnecessary inconvenience?"

The Hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—"I have already promised to consider the legal aspect, to see that polling stations are situated as conveniently as possible."

Mr. V. T. ARASU:—"May I know whether the Hon. Minister is aware of the fact that in certain districts polling stations were fixed within municipal areas, for instance in Conjeeveram, in the Chingleput district?"

Diwan Bahadur T. A. RAMALINGAM CHETTIYAR:—"In fact even the district board offices are in the municipal limits."

The Hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—"I am not aware of the case quoted by Mr. Arasu. I shall look into the question."

Polling arrangements for elections to the Tinnevelly District Board.

* 564 *Q.*—Mr. P. RATNAVELU THEVAR: Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that in respect of the forthcoming elections to the District Board of Tinnevelly no polling centres have been located within the municipal limits of Tinnevelly;

(*b*) which is the nearest place at which voters resident in the Tinnevelly Municipality can record their votes;

(*c*) what is the distance of that polling centre from the municipality;

(*d*) whether all municipalities in the districts in which the district board elections are pending have been thus deprived of polling centres within their own limits; and

(*e*) if the reply to the above question is in the negative, which municipalities have thus been deprived and which have not?

A.—(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) & (*c*) There are three polling stations, Tenpathu, Manimurtiswaram and Kandiaperi, situated on the neighbourhood of the Tinnevelly municipal limits and one Thoppayamadam Chatram at a distance of about a mile from the said limits.

(*d*) & (*e*) No district board polling centre is situated in a municipality.